in the Official Gazette with effect from such date as may be specified in the notification. The proviso to Section 9(3) of the Act prevents the Central Government from enhancing the rate of royalty in respect of any mineral more than once during any period of three years. The Act does not mandate any specific time frame for revision of rates of royalty. Royalty rates are revised after taking into consideration the interests of all stakeholders and the overall economic scenario in the country. As such, the question of compensation for the loss to the State Governments on this account does not arise.

Mining lease applications

1017. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a large number of industries whose mining lease applications have been recommended by the State Government of Jharkhand to the Ministry of Coal almost 6 months ago and his Ministry has not cleared the same;

(b) whether the Ministry has made any reference to seek clarification from Jharkhand Government or from the allottees;

(c) the reasons for the undue delay;

(d) the number of such pending cases which have already been recommended by the State Government and are waiting to be cleared by the Ministry; and

(e) the time period taken/required to clear such projects?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (DR. DASARI NARAYAN RAO): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, an application for mining lease duly recommended by the State of Jharkhand in respect of Moitra coal block allocated to M/s. Jayaswal Neco Ltd., was received in the Ministry in the first week of June, 2007. Another application in respect of Badam coal block allocated to M/s. Tenughat Vidyut Nigam Ltd., was received in the Ministry in the last week of July, 2007.

(c) The prior approval in respect of Moitra coal block could not be given for the reason that the mining area, to be recommended for mining lease, was getting examined. The State Government of Jharkhand has been requested on 11.09.2007 to clarify/confirm the mining area to be covered under the mining lease. Reply from the State Government is awaited. In respect of Badam coal block also, mining area to be recommended for mining lease is getting verified.

(d) No case except the two cases referred to in reply to part (a) above are pending in the Ministry.

(e) The proposals received from the State Governments are cleared expeditiously except in those cases which require further examination/clarification from the State Governments.

Regulatory authority for coal sector

1018. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to set up a regulatory authority for coal sector;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?